



Designing Quality Performance Assessments Institute **Application and Guidelines for Interested NH Schools**

A. Overview of the Initiative

Designing Quality Performance Assessments is an exciting new multi-year initiative that aims to engage New Hampshire's school districts in building valid and reliable performance assessments into our state student assessment system.

Performance assessments are multi-step assignments with clear criteria, expectations, and processes which measure how well a student transfers knowledge and applies complex skills to create or refine an original product.

The foundational principles of this initiative are:

- New Hampshire's Student Assessment System should promote and measure the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that lead students to graduate from high school college- and career-ready.
- Performance assessments are a vehicle for encouraging teaching and learning of meaningful content.
- New Hampshire's system of educator support should build the capacity of educators to engage students in learning of meaningful knowledge and skills
- Accountability systems, including educator evaluation systems, should be built upon a foundation of a student assessment system that measures critically important student outcomes

B. How the Initiative Will Be Structured

This initiative will provide substantial support for a cohort of 10-15 New Hampshire high schools to participate in the 2012-2013 school year. Including middle school representation on the team is encouraged to provide continuity and support for future cohorts, which will include schools across the K-12 span. High schools that encompass middle school grades are eligible to apply with a team representing grades 6-12. We will be seeking to enroll teams that represent the diversity of the state's schools/districts.

Selected school teams will engage in a year-long professional development institute that will include the following goals:

- Build school team expertise in how to design, administer, and reliably score high-quality performance assessments, aligned with the Common Core and the school's required competencies;
- Provide teams with tools and resources that will enable them to establish a shared understanding and school-wide culture of quality performance assessments;
- Expand school and district capacity to create and sustain a system of valid and reliable performance assessments in which student-centered learning is embedded; and
- Develop and field-test several cross-school or grade common performance assessments in ELA and/or mathematics.

APPLICATION for *Designing Quality Performance Assessment*

Teams will engage in highly interactive activities, with teachers and school leaders (curriculum directors, department chairs, instructional coaches, principals, etc.) examining sample exemplar performance assessments in mathematics and ELA, as well as applying tools and processes provided to develop or evaluate assessment products, designed to be adopted in their schools. These activities include:

1. Self-Assessment Survey

Each school team will complete an assessment survey tool intended to describe the school's current state of readiness for performance assessment implementation.

2. Institute Professional Development Days

Institute days will be at a central NH location (to be determined) with breakfast and lunch provided.

Fall: Thursday and Friday, Nov 1-2, 2012	Opening institute days: Performance assessment institute with school/district teams (two days)
Winter: Friday, Jan 25, 2013	Follow-up institute day: student work analysis and scoring
Winter: Tuesday, Feb 12, 2013	Follow-up institute day: tuning next assessment
Spring: Tuesday, April 16, 2013	Closing institute day: student work analysis, identifying lessons and next steps (<i>note: may be a half day as determined by the cohort</i>)

3. Additional support and coaching

Opportunities for support and sharing through webinars, school visits, or conference calls will be held between professional development institute days on different aspects of creating, administering, and using data from quality performance assessments. The first webinar will be an introduction to the initiative that outlines the year's goals, activities, and logistics. These activities will be held in the afternoons to accommodate school schedules; they will not be held on the months in which there are institute days. As well, schools will receive a limited number of days of onsite performance assessment coaching.

4. Participation in State-Wide Committees Designing Common Performance Tasks

Teachers from participating districts will be recruited to serve on state-wide committees to design a bank of validated common performance assessment tasks that will be the foundation of the state's new performance assessment component in our state student assessment system.

C. Application and Selection Process

The required application information is on pages 4-5 of this document and also online. All applications will be due electronically by **Wednesday, October 3, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.** via survey monkey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NHdesigningQPA> or to Shirley Hadley at: Shirley.Hadley@doe.nh.gov. Online applications are encouraged. Questions can be submitted by email or phone to Paul Leather at Paul.L Leather@doe.nh.gov or 603-271-3801.

Successful applications must include a representative team membership. Schools teams can include up to eight members, while smaller schools can choose to designate a team as small as four members.

- Principal or designee administrator (required)
- One to three mathematics teachers and/or one to three ELA teachers (required)
- One teacher or school leader (department chair, curriculum director, etc.) from an additional academic disciplines (social studies, science, etc.)

APPLICATION for *Designing Quality Performance Assessment*

- Middle grades representation (especially consider curriculum directors, department chairs, instructional coaches, principals, etc.)
- Based on your school configuration you may want to include math or literacy coaches or other instructional support staff, such as a special education teacher

Applications will be reviewed over the week of October 8th. Lead contacts for each team may also be contacted by phone or email for more information during the application review week. All applicants will be notified if they have been selected by Friday, October 12, 2012.

Selection of high schools and middle/high school teams will be based on the following criteria:

- Evidence of commitment and readiness to engage in the development and implementation of high quality performance assessments
- Proposed team meets the minimum requirements
- Diversity of NH school districts (e.g., large-small; rural, suburban, urban)

D. Benefits to the School and District

- Significant professional development on developing high quality performance assessments as a means of assessing NH competencies
- Development of a cadre of experts and school-based leaders in quality performance assessments
- Access to multiple tools to create high quality performance assessments, as well as a web-based bank of examples of validated local performance assessments
- Opportunity for leadership in the design and implementation of a state-wide student performance assessment system
- Development of performance assessments that can be used to assess Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) for educator evaluation

E. Requirements of the School and District

- Provide any required substitutes or stipends for team participation in the institute
- Team leader agrees to communicate all information (such as disseminating readings before sessions) to all team members and support members in preparing and following up for each activity
- Commitment to engage in all institute activities (e.g., team attendance at institute days and webinars, implementation of performance assessments and collections of student work samples, dissemination of learnings within the school)

APPLICATION for *Designing Quality Performance Assessment*

New Hampshire Department of Education

Designing Quality Performance Assessments Institute
Application

District: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

Grades: _____

Student enrollment: _____ **Size of faculty:** _____

Lead Contact: _____ **Position:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Proposed Team Members: Administrator and representation from ELA and/or mathematics, one additional subject (could be a department head or curriculum coordinator), and middle school grades. Where school size permits we encourage two teachers each in ELA and mathematics. Teams should be between 4-8 members. See p. 2-3 for additional guidance on team configuration.

Name	Position (if teacher, indicate subject)	E-mail

Briefly describe the focus (2-3 key activities) of your school's work to date with competencies.

APPLICATION for *Designing Quality Performance Assessment*

What work, if any, has been done to update assessments to ensure they are aligned to the competencies?

Describe your school's current use of performance assessment (e.g., list various subjects and grade levels).

Describe any continued or prior participation with outside experts, such as a performance assessment development network or organization.

What is at least one thing your school/district hope to gain through participation in the performance assessment initiative?

Statement of Commitment:

If selected to participate in the Designing Quality Performance Assessment Institute, our team will commit to attending all institute activities and contribute to the ongoing professional network for quality performance assessments.

Principal

Date

Superintendent

Appendix: Overview of the conceptual foundations, goals, and structure of the initiative

Why is performance assessment important?

The New Hampshire Department of Education is committed to ensuring that all of its graduating students are college and career ready. Recent advances in technology, the economy, and globalization require that schools teach new 21st century content and skills to prepare students for post-secondary education, career, and civic life. To this end, the state board of education adopted the Common Core State Standards which are “designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the academic knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers” (<http://www.corestandards.org/>).

The Common Core Standards are reflected in the NHDOE policy requiring all high school courses to be aligned to course-level competencies, which is one step we have taken to foster new practices of assessment that promote and measure “deeper levels of understanding important academic content and skills.” Deeper learning prepares students to master core academic content, think critically and solve complex problems, work collaboratively, communicate effectively, and learn how to learn (e.g., self-directed learning),” thereby helping students succeed in a world that is changing at an unprecedented pace (Hewlett Foundation, 2012). High quality performance assessments are the best means of measuring this new 21st century knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for students to be college- and career-ready.

Goals and Structure of the Initiative

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) is partnering with the Center for Collaborative Education (CCE) and the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA) to integrate performance assessments into our state student assessment system in a manner that will balance local control with state-wide accountability and comparability. As part of this work, NHDOE will oversee an initiative to work with schools and districts in annual cohorts to build their capacity to design and implement local Common Core-aligned performance assessment systems. With an end goal of integrating performance assessments into the state student assessment system, this initiative will include a set of common performance assessments that have high technical quality, locally designed assessments with guidelines for ensuring high technical quality, regional scoring sessions and local district peer review audits to ensure sound accountability systems and high inter-rater reliability, a web-based bank of local and common performance assessments, and a regional support network to districts and schools. Performance assessments are also an important tool for assessing Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) for New Hampshire’s educator evaluation.